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SOURCE Pravda Ukrainy.

METALLURGY CONFERENCE
ANALYZES STEEL INDUSTRY LAG

[Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

A 3-day conference of leading workers and engineering and technical personnel of the ferrous metallurgy industry of the South and Center opened in Stalino on 29 May. The 1,500 participants included representatives from enterprises in Moscow, the Donbass and Dnepr regions, Rostov, Tula, and Stalingrad oblasts, and the Transcaucasus, as well as guests from Ural and Siberian plants, workers of the coal, construction, and railroad industries, and representatives of Party and trade union organizations and scientific institutions.(1)

The work of the conference helped to make a profound analysis of conditions in ferrous metallurgy enterprises and to point out the tremendous reserves available to the industry for making a decisive increase in the production of pig iron, steel, and rolled metal, for exceeding the 1950 plan, and for achieving the highest possible technical and industrial indexes.(2)

A. N. Kuz'min, Minister of the Metallurgical Industry USSR, gave a report on the tasks of ferrous metallurgy workers in the completion of the 1950 plan ahead of schedule. The minister reported that, in 1949, output of pig iron increased 19 percent over 1948, smelting of steel 25 percent, and output of rolled metal 27 percent. Production of pipe, coke, refractories, and output of ore also increased. These increases were attained for the most part by improved utilization of equipment and plant capacity. The coefficient for capacity utilization of blast furnaces and the production of steel per square meter of furnace hearth considerably exceeded prewar indexes. Labor productivity increased substantially, production costs decreased, and the turnover of working capital was accelerated. (1)

Kuz'min's report indicated that the rate of increase in the plants of the South and Center would have been even higher if a number of plants, particularly the Makeyevka Plant imeni Kirov, "Azovstal'," "Zaporozhstal'," and the Kramatorsk Plant imeni Kuybyshev, had not decreased the production level during the first 4 months of 1950. (2) The report severely criticized the blast-furnace operators of

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these plants for their failure to meet the pig-iron production plans for the past few months.(1) The great amount of production owed the country by the southern metallurgical industry is the result of serious shortcomings in the management of individual plants, unsatisfactory preparations for winter, slackening of labor and industrial discipline, and completely unsatisfactory management of socialist competition for fulfillment of pledges.(2)

The report outlined as the main tasks of central and southern iron and steel workers the immediate elimination of the lag in certain plants, further mechanization and automatization of production processes, reduction in the degree of idleness of equipment, and economy in consuming raw materials and fuel. These measures should be accomplished through extensive socialist competition, introduction of advanced work methods, and adoption of progressive norms in production.(1)

In the discussion following the report, Fomenko, director of the Plant imeni Dzerzhinskiy, stated that his enterprise had obtained higher performance indexes for many of its machines than the prewar indexes, but the workers did not completely meet their pledges and fell considerably short of the plans for the first months of this year. Fomenko defined the cause of the lowered production level at the plant as the weakening of management in the shops and the subsequent failure to observe established technological procedures. He also stated that much depends not only on plant directors but also on the effectiveness of the work of the main administration and the ministry.

Yakimenko, steelworker at the "Zaporozhstal'" Plant, spoke with great concern on the conditions in his plant. He stated that the enterprise is operating poorly despite its advanced production technology. Idleness of equipment and overexpenditure of raw materials are major faults of the plant's operation. Leading stakhanovites have had to carry the weight of the entire shop and the entire plant. The time has come to review certain technological instructions which are out-dated, have been superseded, and hold back the advance of production.

Klimenko, steelworker at the Stalino Plant imeni Stalin, reported that his plant is operating poorly this year, despite improved equipment and the advancement of the workers. Performance indexes are lower than in 1949. Delays of 3 to 4 hours are common where minutes and seconds count. Plant, shop, and Party leaders have not been sufficiently concerned with such matters, nor even about the workers' daily living needs.

Vardysh Koberidze, foreman of blast furnace No 4 at the Yenakiyevo Metallurgical Plant, reported on his new pledge to increase the coefficient for capacity utilization of the furnace to 0.80, and posed the problem of the necessity of increasing the responsibility of the furnace foreman, thereby giving greater impetus to his work. I. G. Korobov, chief foreman of the Makeyevka Plant, also discussed the role of the foreman in production and his responsibility for the introduction of advanced work methods. He mentioned the formalism which has been prevailing in competitions and the harmful conceit connected with it. Where formerly the Makeyevka workers had made every effort to win the Transferable Red Banner of the Council of Ministers USSR from the Kuznetsk Combine, they have not even seen the banner for a long time now. The workers fail to observe correct technical procedures or to demand the best from enterprises supplying raw materials to the plant.

Almost all participants in the discussion dealt at length with the problem of supplies, and directors of enterprises presented before the ministry a number of important problems connected with further improvement in the work of the Krivoy Rog Iron Basin, the Manganese Basin, coke-chemical enterprises, refractories shops, "Vtorchermet" (ferrous metal scrap), limestone quarries, and refractories plants. The majority of the conferees agreed that the enterprises supplying raw materials to metallurgical enterprises must be raised to the level demanded by high-speed production, and that without improvement in the quality of raw materials it will be impossible to increase the production rate. The ministry was criticized for considering the problem of supplies of secondary importance.

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The metallurgists made particularly serious charges against the "Krivbass-ruda" Trust. The Krivbass has not been meeting its ore-mining plans, has not prepared to meet the current production program which has been substantially increased over the 1949 plan, and has been decreasing the quality of ore supplied to blast furnaces both in iron content and in size requirements. Because of this, the blast furnaces have had to increase ore, limestone, and coke consumption substantially, and blast-furnace performance has suffered.

In his speech before the conference, Kudryashev, director of the "Krivbass-ruda" Trust, attempted to blame the trust's lag on objective causes and did not make a true appraisal of the faulty management work of the trust's administration and of a number of mine administrations. Kudryashev, however, did make a number of just demands on the ministry for improvement in the supplies of machinery to the basin's mines.

Lukich, secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast Party Committee, also criticized the directors of the Krivbass Trust and showed that responsibility for the trust's poor work must be shared by the Krivoy Rog City Committee and the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast Committee KP(b) Ukraine. Lukich reminded the conference that the TsK KP(b) Ukraine had severely criticized the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast Party Committee for the deficiencies in the ferrous metallurgy enterprises of the oblast, but that these deficiencies, particularly in the Plant imeni Petrovskiy (director, I. Korobov), are still being eliminated at an extremely slow rate.

Participants in the conference criticized "Glavvtorchernet" (Main Administration of Ferrous Metal Scrap) for its lag in processing metal scrap and its failure therefore to supply steelworkers with many thousand tons of processed scrap.

It was also noted that the Yenakiyevo, Zaporozh'ye, and Zhdanov coke-chemical plants have been operating poorly and have been producing low-quality coke. Limestone enterprises have not improved their operations. At the Yelenovka quarries, excavators are idle 50 percent of working time, and the quality of the limestone has considerably decreased. Enterprises of the ferrous metallurgy industry have still not undertaken preparations for the coming winter and have not taken the measures necessary to build up supplies of ore, limestone, and other raw materials for the winter. Bardagov, director of the Krasnogorovka Refractories Plant, blamed workers of the ministry for their lack of attention to refractories enterprises.

Podzerko, Party organizer at the Plant imeni Dzerzhinskiy, then reported on experience in Party work among metallurgical workers.

Gmyrya, director of the Voroshilov Metallurgical Plant, and Khutoryanskiy, secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast Trade Union Committee of Metallurgical Workers, brought up a number of important problems connected with the organization of socialist competition, the drive for fulfillment of norms by all workers, and advancement of the qualifications of metallurgical personnel. The report mentioned the formalistic character of many competitions, and the lack of exchange of advanced methods among enterprises of the Donbass, Center, and East. Plants have been slow to adopt efficiency proposals. Pamphlets on technical and economic subjects should be published on a wide scale for metallurgical workers, but the ministry is doing nothing to meet this demand. The activity of the main administrations, the technical administration of the ministry, "Metallurgizdat," and scientific and technical periodicals came in for serious criticism for their failure to approve and support the initiative of production innovators.

Several directors of enterprises tried to evade criticism of their errors and shortcomings at the conference. This was particularly true of Kogan, director of "Azovstal'," who spent an excessive amount of time in listing his complaints against the enterprises supplying raw materials and in listing the so-called objective causes for his plant's lag, but failed to mention the major shortcomings of the plant's directors, namely, their suppression of criticism and self-criticism and failure to observe strict production and technological procedures.

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P. I. Korobov, Deputy Minister of the Metallurgical Industry USSR, gave a detailed analysis of the lag in blast-furnace production. He pointed out that, if the work level of blast furnaces is to be raised in the shortest possible time, then it will be necessary to stop underestimating such important factors as the neutralization of ore, the correct maintenance of equipment, and the observance of repair schedules. Both blast-furnace workers and workers in plants supplying raw materials must be responsible for these measures. Speaking of the raw material supply industry, Korobov sharply criticized the report given by Yemel'yanov, chief of the Main Administration of the Nonmetallic Minerals Industry, in which there appeared much boasting and too little real analysis of conditions in the limestone-quarrying industry.

Among others participating in the discussion which followed Kuz'min's report were: Belobrov, director of the Makeyevka Plant imeni Kirov; Bychkov, chief of the Main Administration of the Metallurgical Industry of the South and Center; Skryabin, secretary of the Zaporozh'ye Oblast Party Committee; Shcherbakov, chief of the blast-furnace shop at "Zaporozhstal';" Struyev, secretary of the Stalino Oblast Party Committee; Subbotin, steelworker at the Moscow "Serp i molot" Plant; Baranov, director of the Plant imeni Stalin; and others. L. G. Mel'nikov, secretary of the TsK KP(b) Ukraine, gave a speech of welcome to the conferees.

The conference approved the decision of the nine sections which had made detailed studies of the possibility of increasing production in each shop and each plant. Conference participants composed a letter to Stalin which listed their pledges for increasing technical and economic indexes.(2)

SOURCES

1. Pravda Ukrainy, No 126, 30 May 50
2. Pravda Ukrainy, No 128, 1 Jun 50

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